



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Superior Court Judge finds Southeast Mother Guilty of Murdering her Four Daughters

WASHINGTON - Thirty-four-year-old Banita Jacks, previously of 4249 6th Street, SE, Washington, D.C., was found guilty today by Superior Court Judge Frederick Weisberg of four counts of First Degree Felony Murder, three counts of First Degree Premeditated Murder, and four counts of First Degree Cruelty to Children, for her role in the death of her four daughters, 16-year-old Brittany Jacks, 11-year-old Tatianna Jacks, 6-year-old N'Kiah Jacks and 5-year-old Aja Jacks, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips announced. Sentencing in the case has been set for October 16, 2009. Due to the aggravating circumstances of the crime, the defendant faces a maximum punishment of life in jail without the possibility of parole.

In announcing today's verdict, Judge Weisberg found that the defendant intentionally maltreated and tortured her daughters, that she was consciously aware of the risk that she caused to each girl, and that she intentionally and recklessly caused each child grave injury and death. Judge Weisberg found that the defendant did nothing to seek benefits for the children, failed to seek financial or other support for the children, isolated the children from others, and stopped feeding the children so that they would die. With respect to Brittany Jacks, Judge Weisberg found that the defendant tortured her both emotionally and physically. Judge Weisberg noted that the remains of the children were too decomposed to permit experts to determine precisely how each child died, but found that this was due solely to the defendant's actions, and reflected her consciousness of guilt.

Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips stated that this prosecution represents the U.S. Attorney's Office's commitment to the protection of the most vulnerable members of our community, our children. He thanked the residents of the neighborhood and other witnesses who spoke for these children at trial.

In announcing this conviction, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips commended the tenacity and perseverance of MPD Major Case/Cold Case Detectives Mitchell Credle, Darryl Richmond, and Jeffrey Williams, along with Special Victim's Unit Detective Carlos Hilliard, for their diligence

in investigating this case, and in securing vital admissions during their interrogation of the defendant. He also commended the work of MPD Officers James Holder, John Holder, George Klein, Grant Greenwalt and Tina Ramadan of the Mobile Crime Unit, along with Deputy U.S. Marshals Kevin Ruark and Nicholas Garrett, who discovered the bodies. Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips praised the work of Paralegals Alesha Matthews and Richard Cheatham, as well as the help of Thomas (Ron) Royal and Dontrell Smith of the Litigation Support Services Unit. He also thanked Victim Advocate Marcia Rinker, Witness Security Specialist LeJune Thames and David Foster of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit. Finally, Mr. Phillips commended the outstanding support of Intern Erin Pulice, and praised the extraordinary work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Deborah Sines and Michelle D. Jackson, who prosecuted this case.

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